

Testimony in support of Bill 11,(2014) CD2 GIA

Mckay Schwenke, Vice President Adult Friends for Youth

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I am in strong support of GIA, Bill 11, CD2 in helping to provide much needed services and support to working with alienated and “high risk” youth at Farrington, Leilehua, Kapolei and Campbell High Schools. Services to this specific population will help address concerns and issues that they deal with on a daily basis. Through such services the clinicians are able to assess, evaluate and explore the needs of their clients together, and discuss alternatives and suggestions on what direction to pursue.

The services will also help decrease violence, drugs, bullying and destructive behavior in both the community and schools and in turn build safer and respected communities to live in and be proud of.

Furthermore, numerous opportunities will become available for kids to learn and grow through vocational skills and through other academic achievements as they continue to focus on their future goals aspirations.

When youth begin to feel more confident about who they are and potentially what they can achieve or become, the sky is the limit for them. The ultimate objective is for these young men and women to eventually become productive and contributing members of society who go on and affect generations to come through their example .

Currently it costs our State over \$100.000 to incarcerate a youth housed at Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF). Many of these kids will end up there if we don’t intervene now. Moreover, it would be far less expensive through preventive measures than waiting for them to get arrested.

I therefore support Bill 11 to help make a difference in the lives of these youth who may otherwise feel abandoned, ignored and forgotten.

Sincerely,

Mckay Schwenke